The Lost Years

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Chapter 1 by Arpan Banerjee

Jerry Mason

As soon as he woke up, he knew something was wrong. A strange old woman was sitting next to him lost in her own world. He sat up and looked around. He was surrounded by many strange-looking machines. 'Where am I?' he thought. After a few minutes, he felt a tingling in his left arm and saw that there was a tube sticking out of him. He suddenly realized he was in a hospital! The woman next to him suddenly stirred and looked at him. She smiled for half a second before suddenly jumping up and running out, all the while shouting "Oh my god, oh my god!" She returned a few minutes later with a man who seemed to be a doctor from the look of his clothes. The doctor put a stethoscope against his chest and told him to breathe deeply. Then he pointed a bright torch into his eyes and he instinctively closed his eyes.

The doctor signalled to the woman and they talked about something. Then the doctor came up to him and said with a bright smile "You're cured son! It's a miracle". He smiled but he didn't know why. 'Cured? What is he talking about?'

The woman handed him a tiny device and told him to talk. Her face had a smile but her eyes had tears. Her face seemed exceedingly familiar. 'I know I've seen her before, but where?' She was

suddenly shouted, shocked. The woman started crying audibly and hugged him saying "I'm sorry" over and over again.

The reflection, he thought, looked like him… only a lot older.

Martha Mason

She was sitting on her chair just like every other day. But today was different. Today was the second time her life was going to change completely. She still remembered the night more than 22 years ago as vividly as yesterday. She was at home reading a book by the window, looking for any signs of a car's headlights on the rainy night. The boys were out to see the game with their father. "It's a guy thing, you won't understand" her elder son, Jason had said.

Then she had got the call. One drunk truck driver had snatched away everything from her.

Her husband and elder son died on the spot, the younger one was paralyzed. Later the next day he slipped into a coma. The driver was punished of course, he was sent to prison. He was released 17 years ago and she hated him with all her will.

She sat reliving that night like every other day, cursing herself for letting them go out on such a rainy night, when she suddenly noticed the boy in the bed sitting up. 'Oh my god!' she thought out loud and rushed out to bring the doctor.

Her mind was overwhelmed by the emotions. She called up her mother and her parents-in-law and told them. Then she gave the phone to Jerry, trying to smile through her tears.

The doctor called her over and told her that he was okay and after keeping him under observation for the night, he would be dispatched the next day. She watched as he talked and then turned towards the mirror and dropped the phone.

She turned to meet his gaze. 'Oh my god, he doesn't know'. Seeing him cry out in shock was too much for her. She hugged him and whispered "It's okay, it's going to be all right". She remembered the days when she had prayed to god to end his life, end her suffering. She had been selfish. Tears welled up in her eyes and she kept repeating "I'm sorry".

She calmed down in a few moments, sat beside him and started telling him what had happened 22 years ago. He asked "Have I really been asleep for 22 years? What's going to happen now? I

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